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at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

later: Mr. ZAHID (Morocco)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) RESPECT FOR THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)

Granting of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that are members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(b) RESPECT FOR THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.2

1. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.2, pointed out that its preamble was virtually the same as that of the draft resolutions presented in previous years. In its operative part, the General Assembly deplored violations of privileges and immunities committed against United Nations personnel, in particular those engaged in peace-keeping operations. It reminded host countries of their responsibility for the safety of all United Nations personnel on their territory and reiterated the importance of providing access of United Nations medical teams to detained staff. Finally, it requested the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel and to continue his efforts to ensure respect for their privileges and immunities. In his capacity as the coordinator of the informal consultations, he proposed that the Committee should adopt the draft resolution without a vote. He pointed out that, in the course of the consultations, a number of delegations had suggested that the question of respect for privileges and immunities should be included in the agenda of future sessions of the Assembly as a separate item, but it had been agreed that the Committee would take a decision on that suggestion outside the discussions on draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.2.

2. Draft resolution A/C.5/47/L.2 was adopted without a vote.

3. Mr. DUQUE (Director of Personnel) thanked the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of the Secretariat, for coordinating the consultations on the draft resolution. The question dealt with in the draft resolution was of major importance to the staff. The wording of paragraphs 7 and 8 clearly showed that the General Assembly was concerned about the safety of United Nations officials and of all personnel - military, civilian or observer - engaged in peace-keeping operations and humanitarian operations throughout the world.

AGENDA ITEM 105: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/47/3, A/47/6, A/47/16 (Parts I and II) and Add.1 and A/47/32 and Add.1)

Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997

Major programme I

4. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the proposed revisions to major programme I, entitled "Maintenance of Peace and Security, Disarmament and Decolonization". He informed the Committee that a reminder had been sent

(The Chairman)

to the Secretaries of the First, Fourth and Special Political Committees, inviting the input of those Committees on the proposed revisions. Pending their replies, he suggested that delegations should make their comments on the eight individual programmes in major programme I so that the Committee could take a decision on the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) with regard to each of the programmes, on the understanding that discussions could continue in informal consultations.

5. Mr. MORET (Cuba) thought that it would be preferable to hear the views of the Main Committees before beginning consideration of the various programmes.

6. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was prepared to go along with any procedure which would speed up the work of the Committee, provided, of course, that due allowance could be made for the views expressed by delegations and the other Main Committees. The procedure suggested by the Chairman appeared to meet those requirements, since the Committee would be free to revert to any programme or subprogramme if the replies from the other Main Committees made that necessary. Delegations could also express their views during the informal consultations if they were not in agreement with some of the recommendations of CPC.

7. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom. According to the procedure suggested by the Chairman, the revisions would be approved on a provisional basis.

8. Mr. BEN HAMIDA (Tunisia) thought that it would be better to wait for the reply from the First Committee before considering major programme I, relating to peace-keeping. In order to speed up its work, the Committee could, however, consider other major programmes, for example those dealing with economic questions, since it had already received the Second Committee's comments.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that he was not sure whether the Committee had all the information it needed to start its consideration of major programmes III and IV. As for major programme I, he had assumed that it was only programme 4 which appeared to give rise to disagreement. The Committee could thus consider the various programmes of major programme I, leaving programme 4 aside for the moment.

10. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco), Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) and Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) supported the Chairman's suggestion.

11. Mr. SPAANS (Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Coordination) said that CPC had made recommendations on all the programmes except subprogramme 4 of programme 4. The Committee could thus proceed to take a decision on most of major programme I.

12. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to examine major programme I, programme by programme, on the understanding that informal consultations would be organized if necessary and that the replies from the other Main Committees would be taken into account.

Programme 1

13. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the recommendations of CPC relating to programme 1 were contained in paragraphs 30 and 31 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

14. Mr. MORET (Cuba) said that the term "preventive diplomacy", in the title of the programme and of subprogramme 1, was unacceptable to his delegation. The proposed revision to paragraph 1.10 of subprogramme 1 sought to introduce that concept on the basis of the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace". That document could not, however, constitute a mandate for programmes since it had not been approved by the General Assembly. Furthermore, the new paragraph 1.19 of subprogramme 3 referred to threats to peace, crises and disputes without using the word "international"; it might thus be thought to refer also to internal conflicts, which were within the exclusive jurisdiction of States. The same problem applied to the reference to peace and security in subparagraph (b) of paragraph 1.21, dealing with the collection and analysis of information. His delegation therefore felt that the Committee should wait for the replies from the other Main Committees and consider the programme in informal consultations.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve the recommendations of CPC on programme 1, as contained in paragraphs 30 and 31 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)), on the understanding that the comments made on that programme would be taken into consideration during informal consultations.

16. It was so decided.

Programme 2

17. The CHAIRMAN said that the recommendations of CPC relating to programme 2 were to be found in paragraph 37 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

18. Mr. MORET (Cuba) proposed that programme 2 should be referred to informal consultations.

19. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) said that delegations should proceed to make their comments on the programme so that the discussions could be reflected in the summary records.

20. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) agreed with the representative of Morocco that it would be better for delegations to indicate their positions before holding informal consultations, the purpose of which was precisely to reconcile those positions.

21. Mr. MORET (Cuba) said that his delegation's reservations related to the fact that, as its new title indicated, programme 2 was intended to strengthen the role of the Security Council. However, that title no longer corresponded to the contents of the only subprogramme under the programme. Issues relating to peace and security considered by the First Committee and by the subsidiary organs of the Security Council were therefore not covered by the programme's title and were thus relegated to secondary importance. Moreover, reference to the title of programme 1, which contained the words "preventive diplomacy", was unnecessary.

22. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that if delegations made proposals which fell outside the framework of the recommendations of CPC, it could have an adverse effect on the informal consultations. For his part, he did not wish to jeopardize the consensus that the CPC recommendations represented, even if those recommendations did not always reflect his delegation's position.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that programme 2 as a whole would be referred to informal consultations.

Programme 3

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to endorse the recommendation of CPC relating to programme 3 contained in paragraph 42 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

25. It was so decided.

Programme 4

26. The CHAIRMAN noted that, in paragraph 53 of its report, CPC had made recommendations on subprogrammes 1 to 3. It had, however, been unable to reach an agreed recommendation on subprogramme 4. He therefore suggested that programme 4 as a whole should be referred to informal consultations.

Programme 5

27. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to endorse the recommendation of CPC relating to programme 5 contained in paragraph 58 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

28. It was so decided.

29. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) said that the views of the United States on programme 5 were well known and recalled his country's reservations with regard to the aims and effects of the programme, which did not contribute to the peace process in the Middle East.

Programme 6

30. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the recommendations of CPC relating to programme 6 were to be found in paragraph 65 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

31. Mr. MORET (Cuba) noted that in the proposed revisions, there was no longer any mention of a number of resolutions which described the situation in South Africa as a threat to international peace and security. That meant that the issue could not be brought before the Security Council. Moreover, the new subparagraph 6.36 (formerly subpara. 6.25) was based on "the consensus resolutions"; that constituted a dangerous precedent since all resolutions had the same value for the medium-term plan, irrespective of how they had been adopted.

32. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) fully agreed with the comments of the Cuban delegation with regard to the danger of excluding some resolutions on the grounds that they had not been adopted by consensus. He also wished to point out that the improvement of the situation in South Africa in no way meant that apartheid had been eliminated; the medium-term plan should therefore not be modified as if the problem no longer existed. His delegation was also concerned about the volume of resources devoted to the programme and would like to know, in particular, how many posts were vacant in the Centre Against Apartheid and whether those posts were frozen. He would also like the Secretariat to provide similar information on preventive diplomacy activities in Africa.

33. Mr. BAUDOT (Acting Controller) said that none of the posts in the budget relating to the elimination of apartheid had been frozen. As for vacancies in the Centre Against Apartheid, only 2 of the 19 Professional posts were vacant and none of the 15 General Service posts was vacant.

34. Mr. COHEN (United States) noted that, by definition, the recommendations of CPC were the outcome of many compromises and could therefore not be totally satisfactory to anyone. If the debate on all those delicate issues were reopened, the consensus achieved by CPC might be jeopardized.

35. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that his delegation had been involved in the compromises worked out in CPC and supported them. However, the situation might perhaps have changed since the Committee's latest session as a result of the programmatic impact of the revised estimates and of the new proposals of the Secretary-General. His delegation's questions were intended to clarify those changes.

36. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that the first reading on which the Committee seemed to be engaged might result in the referral of a very large number of programmes to the informal consultations. That being the case, his delegation reserved the right to review its overall position at a later stage and to request that the debate be reopened on certain other programmes.

37. The CHAIRMAN said that programme 6 was referred to the informal consultations.

Programme 7

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the recommendations of CPC on programme 7 were contained in paragraph 68 of its report (A/47/16 (Part II)).

39. Mr. ORR (Canada) said that his delegation had already raised the question of the functioning of the disarmament programmes and stressed the need to ensure that they enjoyed the necessary support. Canada attached particular importance to the CPC recommendation in paragraph 68 (b) of its report concerning the establishment and maintenance of a Register of Conventional Arms. It seemed that the First Committee was considering a draft resolution requesting the Secretary-General to ensure that sufficient resources were made available to the Secretariat for the establishment and maintenance of the Register, and in paragraph 36 of his report on the new dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament (A/C.1/47/7) the Secretary-General had assured the General Assembly that the Organization would do all that it could to make the Register an efficient and successful service for Member States. Canada fully supported the efforts made by the Secretary-General to restructure the Organization and hoped that, within that framework and within the limits of the Organization's resources, the new Office for Disarmament Affairs would have sufficient staff not only to establish and maintain the Register and the disarmament data base but also to carry out its other priority tasks. Pending the proposals to be made on that subject in the next proposed programme budget, his delegation hoped that the Secretary-General, using the room for manoeuvre available to him in the use of resources, would invest the Office with the necessary means for it to function successfully.

40. Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium), Mr. PENEV (Bulgaria), Ms. ICHIKAWA (Japan), Mr. SHARMA (Nepal) and Ms. ROEDSMOEN (Norway) said that their delegations fully supported the views of the Canadian delegation.

41. Mr. MORET (Cuba) said that his delegation disagreed with the replacement of the Department for Disarmament Affairs by the Department of Political Affairs. There was also a proposal to insert a new paragraph 7.9 indicating a considerable shift in priorities, something which his delegation could not accept with respect to programme 7. There were in fact no priorities other than those stated in paragraph 45 of the final document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly. Lastly, paragraph 7.9 (b), concerning the summit meeting of the Security Council on 31 July 1992, seemed to impose an order of priorities on the Council's disarmament activities. For all those reasons his delegation thought it preferable to refer programme 7 to the informal consultations.

42. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that his delegation endorsed the views of the Canadian delegation but thought that the regional disarmament centres should play an important role in the realization of the programme's objectives. The

(Mr. Irumba, Uganda)

Secretariat had been requested to submit a report on the funding of the centres, which should be strengthened and given sufficient resources.

43. Mr. ONWUALIA (Nigeria) and Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that their delegations agreed with the views of the Ugandan delegation on the need to strengthen the regional centres.

44. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) asked whether the question of the relationship between the various elements in the plan and the corresponding resources really fell within the scope of the item under consideration.

45. Mr. IRUMBA (Uganda) said that it was important to consider the question, not only because it determined whether the approved programmes would actually be implemented but also because it would speed up the consideration of the revised budget estimates.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that the item under consideration dealt with the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan and that related questions, including questions of resources, could be raised in the informal consultations.

47. Mr. BAUDOT (Acting Controller) said that there were three P-5 posts for the heads of the three regional centres and, as far as he recalled, none of the posts was vacant. Furthermore, a report on the administrative costs of the centres was to be put before the Committee at any moment. As to the more general question of the relationship between the medium-term plan and resources, it was both legitimate and useful for delegations to say what they thought on the topic and to ask the Secretariat for information during formal meetings, but it would be preferable for the informal consultations to deal only with matters relating directly to the revisions to the plan.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that programme 7 was referred to the informal consultations.

Programme 8

49. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to endorse the CPC recommendation on programme 8, which was contained in paragraph 70 of its report.

50. It was so decided.

51. Mr. Zahid (Morocco), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 104: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993 (continued)
(A/C.5/47/CRP.1, A/46/349 and A/47/454)

Granting of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that are members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law

52. The CHAIRMAN reminded the Committee that he had been requested to organize informal consultations on the question of the granting of travel assistance to least developed and other developing countries that were members of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law. Despite the flexibility shown by all delegations and the progress made in the consultations, owing to lack of time it had not been possible to reach a consensus on the request made by the Sixth Committee. It had therefore been agreed to continue the informal consultations, and the Chairman of the Sixth Committee had agreed to that arrangement. He therefore suggested that the informal consultation should be continued and that the item should be taken up again when an agreement had been reached.

53. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.